

Well, as it's the one story where Nyssa really lets her hair down, maybe you'll forgive me for giving the poor, tragic girl a jolly good smacked bottom. :-)

I'm going to delay the turning-point where George, in the Doctor's costume, dances with Ann, kills the butler and frightens her. For the story's sake, let's presume he is wandering around the fancy dress party undetected, and that the Doctor comes down after his bath, in his own clothes, puzzled at the disappearance of his costume. (He'll need to get back and change into the costume later, so the story can pick up for Part Two, but that's not my problem :-)

Meanwhile, Ann and Nyssa, in their identical butterfly outfits, are going round the party causing all manner of mischief and confusion. Convincing a guest that he has drunk too much and is seeing double, for example. Definite misbehavior. Eventually Lord Cranleigh rounds them up and scolds them, with the Doctor present. Ann should act like a hostess, and Nyssa should not abuse her privileges as a guest, whereas they have both behaved like spoilt children. Ann has a little flash of temper, stamps her foot, and asks him what he's going to do about it. He says he's doing it: asking her not to. Still in a tantrum, Ann speaks before thinking and says that George (her ex-fiance) was twice the man he was. (Implying he would do more than just tell her off.)

The Doctor explains: 'I think she means, Lord Cranleigh, that your brother would have given these naughty girls a good spanking.' He looks meaningfully at Nyssa, who suddenly realizes she's in serious trouble. 'Capital idea,' says Lord Cranleigh, and advances on Ann, rolling up his sleeve. Both girls squeal and run away indoors. The Doctor and Lord Cranleigh follow, catch them, and each puts one of them across his knee.

Lord Cranleigh seems to be taking the lead from the Doctor in this scenario, so the Doctor is the first to lift the struggling girl's skirt, revealing silk stockings, garters and white 1920s knickers, like lace-trimmed shorts, which he starts to spank. Lord Cranleigh follows suit, grasps the hemline, pulls the skirt up and over ... to reveal Nyssa's tight modern panties. They have gotten the two girls confused in the melee. 'I say, Doctor,' he calls, and the Doctor looks up from spanking Ann. The girls then change places so that each of them is spanked by the right person. Ann is secretly pleased that her fiance is proving to be a real man at last. Nyssa just cries.

The point here is that the Doctor can't tell that he isn't spanking Nyssa, because it is possible to assume that she has been given appropriate 1920s underwear as part of her costume. It is only when Nyssa's actual anachronistic panties are seen that the mistaken identity is revealed.

This is one scenario where our recent discussion about alien companions' undies becomes pertinent. (About how we can know whether they wear underwear that we would recognize as bra and panties if we have never seen it.) We do see Nyssa wearing shorts in 'Terminus', but somehow they don't seem the right underwear for the tight velvet pants. For some reason I have a very clear mental picture of

Nyssa's panties in this scene: a shiny silk-looking fabric, tight, seamless, high-waisted and honey-colored. I can't think why.

The other thing about the 'Black Orchid' scenario is that it gives Ann a reason to be slightly resentful of the Doctor. She's an interesting character, marrying the surviving brother after her original fiance is presumed dead. I envisage her comparing the two and maybe secretly thinking of Charles as second best: that's why she goads him into spanking her, without consciously intending that to be the outcome, and why at one level she is pleased it happens. But more consciously she doesn't enjoy it at all: it was painful and undignified. She progressively resents the Doctor as she considers how he proposed to spank her, then, worse, how he exposed her underwear, and finally, worst of all, how he administered part of the punishment himself. That makes her a little more forceful when she starts accusing him in Part Two. I guess that could earn her another spanking later on...